



where the writers are

April 10, 2008



*Zane Buzby & Holocaust Survivor Esfir Braylovskaya, Pinsk, Belarus 2007*

What prompts a creative heart? Why is it that creative people seem the most likely to help when it's needed? It doesn't matter if they can afford to or not, but they find a way. Oh, I don't just mean the fund I started on a shoestring in my mother's memory, I mean all of us who are involved in the creative arts. I found out about one such heart, one such charity today and it has moved me almost beyond words.

Zane Buzby is a talented woman. We've appreciated her work for years whether we realized it or not. A comedy director who has been in the director's chair for *The Golden Girls*, *Newhart*, *Married with Children* among the credits for her more than 200 episodes for network television. But she is more than just the sum total of her work although, for many people, that would be enough. She also owns and operates The Lower East Side Restoration Project, specializing in antique Judaica brought to the New World during the Great Immigration. That, too, would be enough for some people. But she has done something far more profound with her life in her "spare time."

This creative, talented woman has started The Survivor Mitzvah Project (<http://www.survivormitzvah.org>) as the result of a trip to trace her roots. The organization helps those forgotten holocaust survivors who still live scattered throughout Eastern Europe. They are impoverished, ill, and isolated. They can't buy the basics, not medicine, not food, not heat and shelter. Zane Buzby created a charity to help them live out their final years with some measure of comfort, dignity and support. 100% of the donations go directly into the hands of the survivors.

I've never met this woman but I admire her for what she is doing, not just what she has accomplished in her professional life. She told a mutual friend, Flo Selfman, "The ability to change someone else's life is absolutely amazing." To date, she has helped over 850 people. New names are sent to her on a regular basis. The people are found and referred to her by Dr. Dovid Katz at Vilnius University. She met him on that trip to trace her roots and he asked her to visit some of the people. The story is hers to tell and it is at her website as well as her blog (<http://survivormitzvah.blogspot.com>). Read it for yourself and see if you are not moved by what she has done.